



## Developing and Exchanging Good Practice Among Local Communities: The Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) seeks to engage local communities because they possess the greatest knowledge of the natural resource base. The UNCCD's Global Mechanism acts as a hub for a network of global and local partners, channeling knowledge and resources to scale-up sustainable natural resource management on the ground. At the national level, the GM facilitates the formulation of a National Action Plan (NAP), with local organizations and projects feeding and being supported by national organizations and the national planning process.

**A bottom-up approach.** Shantumbu is a typical rural area near Lusaka with high temperatures and seasonal rainfall. It comprises 11 villages, with about 500 households and an average family size of about seven people. Subsistence farming and charcoal burning are the dominant economic activities. Desertification in Shantumbu has become a problem because this poor community could not sustain the use of chemical fertilizers and lime to fertilize and neutralize the soils. Therefore, most of the cropland has been acidified and abandoned, and what is being used now has lower crop yields. And as more and more people search for virgin, cultivable land, indigenous forests are being destroyed. Massive charcoal burning to provide fuel for Lusaka has also contributed to forest loss.

Through the NAP consultative process, the Shantumbu community met the Zambia Alliance of Women (ZAW), and community leaders asked ZAW to launch awareness and training programs in the area.

The response from the community, and especially from women, has been overwhelming. The community is exploring

alternative sources of energy and embarking on income-generating ventures, including community-based-eco-tourism, a business that is being learned from other communities. Based on their success, the women of Shantumbu have organized their own association to grow and sustain these initiatives.

**Sharing lessons learned.** The Shantumbu and other local experiences are being shared throughout the region through the Global Mechanism's Community Exchange and Training Program (CETP). The CETP targets poor rural communities whose livelihoods are jeopardized by unsustainable resource management. It brings together local communities using NGOs as intermediaries to exchange experience and best practice.

**Developing the national action plan through indigenous knowledge and technologies.** Another local beneficiary of the CETP is the Northwest Córdoba Producers Association (APENOC) in Argentina. APENOC is receiving support to identify, test and disseminate traditional indigenous knowledge and technologies among the farmers it serves. The program also supports the exchange of information between APENOC and other organizations in other provinces in Argentina. It will eventually result in the development of a sub-regional action program to combat desertification. That program will eventually come together with other regional action programs to inform a national action program which would be expected to be imbedded in the national planning and budget framework and supported by the national government and a wide array of donors.

For more information see [www.UNCCD.org](http://www.UNCCD.org), and [www.IFAD/GlobalMechanism.org](http://www.IFAD/GlobalMechanism.org)

## Delivering Global Public Goods Locally: Lessons Learned And Successful Approaches

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### Introduction

During the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the World Bank convened a panel of global and local stakeholders to discuss the challenges which global and regional partnership programs (GPPs) face in collaborating with local stakeholders. The meeting yielded lessons from a number of programs that, for example, are including beneficiaries in project design and implementation, encouraging the commitments of national governments, and devolving decision-making to the lowest appropriate levels. These lessons and approaches are highlighted in this note for the benefit of GPP managers, practitioners and supporters.

### What are global partnership programs?

Global partnership programs have been the subject of recent academic literature as well as of the UN and World Bank.<sup>2</sup> They are seen as *new institutional forms* that respond to the need to cut across geographic and organizational boundaries to deliver global and regional public goods,<sup>3</sup> and they are seen to do so with greater development

<sup>1</sup> Global to local engagement is an evolving area of practice and research. The lessons described in this note are drawn from the approaches discussed in Johannesburg as well as from independent program evaluations. They are not meant to be exhaustive or definitive.

<sup>2</sup> See for example, Wolfgang H. Reinicke and Francis Deng, *Critical Choices: The United Nations, Networks, and the Future of Global Governance*, IDRC, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Such goods include, for example, agriculture and health research, mitigation of climate change, conservation of biodiversity, containment of communicable diseases, and assurance of international financial stability.

<sup>4</sup> Partnerships are needed in the delivery of global public goods because (i) issues like communicable disease spill across national borders, (ii) global knowledge creation and sharing and setting standards require economies of coordination and scale, and (iii) challenges of the global commons like forest loss and climate change can only be resolved through collective action.

effectiveness than would be the case if each of the partners were to act independently.<sup>4</sup> They are also important in reinforcing country based efforts. Examples of such programs include the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, the Global Water Partnership, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, and the Multilateral Initiative on Malaria.

Some GPPs are focused broadly in areas like international research, standard setting and advocacy. But many also provide country-level services such as dissemination

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of best practices, improvement of national policies, provision of goods and services, and support – often through grant making – to augment local capacity in utilizing new knowledge and technologies. While some programs are well established, others are less than five years old. In some cases, they have fragile institutional arrangements. Many are a fraction of the size they need to be in order to achieve their objectives, and most struggle with the practical challenges of demonstrating their value and scaling-up to have global or regional impact.

#### Delivering global public goods locally.

One of the key lessons emerging from Johannesburg is that in order to have impact *globally* it is often necessary to be relevant and engage partners and deliver results *locally*.

Local stakeholder participation in global programs can be a particularly good indicator for success (see Box 1). For example, a recent study by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF, which finances environmental public goods) on stakeholder participation in biodiversity conservation projects, found that stakeholder participation, especially by affected communities, is essential if behavioral change is expected and interventions are to be sustained.<sup>5</sup>

**Participation, relevance to local realities and local impact remains a formidable challenge.** This is true for both GEF projects and global programs that are involved in the provision of knowledge and technical assistance or make investments locally.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Participation Means Learning Through Doing: GEF's Experience in Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use.* GEF Lessons Notes 12, July 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Global and regional programs differ in respect to the nature of goods and services provided at the global/regional levels and at the country level. Some programs focus only on advocacy, global rule and standards setting, knowledge management, research or donor coordination at the global/regional level. Others, which concern us here, provide knowledge, capacity building and resources locally.

<sup>7</sup> See The World Bank's Approach to Global Programs: An Independent Evaluation – Phase I. May 8, 2002

#### Box 1: Importance of Participation in Global Programs

- Provides *legitimacy* to global efforts
- Demonstrates that global programs *reflect and are informed by local realities*
- Encourages global programs to be *accountable* to intended beneficiaries
- Reinforces *implementation capacity* and *sustainability*

For example, the GEF study found that stakeholder participation was comprehensive in only 30 percent of projects reviewed. Similarly, a recent World Bank Operations and Evaluation Department (OED) report found that for most of 70 global programs that aim to provide global knowledge or technical assistance to developing countries, “the relevance of the information, effectiveness of exchange, and extent to which the exchange is building developing country capacity to access new knowledge is mixed.”<sup>7</sup>

The report found that “linkages between global programs and developing countries are inadequate... countries do not always have the capacity to connect effectively to global programs or access their benefits.” OED also reported that global program task managers at the World Bank believe that one of the biggest obstacles to achieving relevance, engagement, and local impact may be that donors, not beneficiaries, still drive the agenda, design and governance of GPPs. Bank managers also pointed to the tenuous connection between beneficiaries in developing countries (intermediaries such as local and national officials, researchers and data managers, private entrepreneurs and national NGOs) and the poor.

**Yet many global programs are engaging locally and provide lessons in how to do so effectively. Three sets of lessons - covering governance and management, partnership and implementation, and resources and capacity building - were shared in Johannesburg and are summarized below.**

#### Drawing on Local Skills and Knowledge: The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

Local people involved with forests have been working to make laws, create parks, fund projects, and plant trees. By generating new ideas, providing high-quality analysis, promoting dialogue, and encouraging learning, CGIAR's Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) aims to respond directly to the needs identified by forest stakeholders.

In West Kalimantan, Indonesia, local villagers are producing valuable charcoal from trees that grow untended in abandoned areas. *Vitex pubescens*, a tree that springs up on land after fires or after farms have been abandoned, yields a charcoal that is as good as that obtained from mangrove trees. Rice does not grow well on the land and farmers find weeding the rough fields too labor intensive. But establishing small local industries to grow *Vitex* for charcoal offers a way of making the land productive again.

#### A local NGO as the pivotal organization.

The idea of developing a *Vitex* industry originally came from a local NGO, Yayasan Dian Tama (YDT), which collaborated with Tanjungpura University in Pontianak to explore how local farmers could best profit from the grasslands. The collaboration capitalized on the strengths of each partner for maximum impact. YDT was the pivotal organization; it conducted research with the University and CIFOR provided scientific input. YDT used its good rapport with local people and their contacts in the regional government while CIFOR made connections to outside parties.

**Drawing on farmers' knowledge.** The Participatory Rice Improvement and Gender/User Analysis (PRIGA) network for West and Central Africa, coordinated by CGIAR's West Africa Rice Development Association (WARDA), delivers adapted rice varieties to farmers throughout the subregion. As the news spreads and demand grows among neighboring farmers, PRIGA

coordinators increasingly are turning to community-based seed systems (CBSS) to meet the surging demand for seed. CBSS starts with farmers' existing seed harvesting and conservation practices, which are refined on the basis of research-generated knowledge on improved seed management. CBSS activities are going on in most of WARDA's 17 member states. For example, in Benin several farmers were trained in 2001 to multiply the three most popular varieties selected in participatory varietal selection (PVS) trials; seeds were sold, exchanged, or given as gift to 110 non-PVS farmers. In Burkina Faso, three varieties were multiplied in three locations by a total of 11 farmers. From 7 hectares, 14 tons of seed were produced. In Togo, seven varieties were multiplied by 54 farmers in three villages.

**Participatory learning.** After the success of integrated crop management in Sahelian irrigated systems, the WARDA-hosted Inland Valley Consortium began a campaign to promote integrated rice management (IRM). Participatory learning and action research (PLAR) was used to build 70 farmers' capability to observe, analyze, and make decisions relative to production constraints and opportunities. The knowledge base is a combination of known IRM components (from the research and extension side) and farmers' own knowledge of their cropping systems. In 2001, the first year, application of IRM increased farm yields by 0.7 tons per hectare. Moreover, each participating farmer shared at least one component of the IRM with an average of two (nonparticipating) neighbors. Four of the 70 farmers were trained as farmer-trainers to extend the PLAR-IRM concept to neighboring inland valley lowlands. The methodology is being delivered to six more countries.

For more information see [www.cgiar.org](http://www.cgiar.org)

## Promoting Inclusion Through Grant Making: The Multilateral Initiative on Malaria

The Multilateral Initiative on Malaria (MIM) aims to maximize the impact of scientific research against malaria by strengthening and sustaining the capability of malaria-endemic countries in Africa to carry out research to develop and improve tools for malaria control.

**Constraints to African participation.** A rational and concerted anti-malarial research effort must involve the participation of researchers from malaria endemic countries. Unfortunately, inadequate and dilapidated research infrastructure limit their contribution, and too many skilled researchers leave for opportunities that offer better resources in European and American laboratories. Furthermore, the external support which African researchers receive is often tied to the research agenda of the donor or developed country research partner. It often fails to address locally research priorities. It rarely provides support for formal academic training. And it fails to encourage interactions between African countries.

**The grant mechanism.** MIM's Task Force on Malaria Research Capability Strengthening in Africa is using a grant mechanism to enable African researchers to conceptualize their own research, choose partner organizations in developed countries on their own terms, and train local researchers.

The Task Force makes grants to African scientists who can build regional networks and international partnerships which address their own research needs and who are training postgraduate students in order to develop more sustainable local expertise. Africans take the lead position on the grant. Calls for proposals are announced by email lists and web sites. Proposals must be submitted and coordinated by an African national scientist working in a research group in Africa and include as least two

African research partners institutions. One of these must be an established institution. In order to raise the capacity of emerging institutions, the other must be an emerging group. The African coordinator must also select at least one non-African partner. The research is conceptualized and managed by the lead African scientist who is advised to submit a pre-proposal outline to the Task Force manager for review. Unlike the results of some collaborations between developed and developing country scientists, research results are published under the principal authorship of the lead African scientist.

Research proposals are reviewed on a competitive basis and with an eye towards ensuring a balanced geographic distribution, support to new areas, and support only to projects which promote complementary scientific collaboration and capacity building. In addition to support for the scientific investigation, proposals may include a request for funding Ph.D. and M.Sc. students. Group training activities such as workshops and meetings of partners, are encouraged as are opportunities for collaborating partners from the North to provide technical support for the investigators in African institutions and short-term student training.

**Creating synergies.** The Task Force also serves to create synergies among its grantees. For example, five projects covering Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, Mali and Tanzania focusing on anti-malarial drug resistance were submitted independently but now form the nucleus of a network involving African investigators in partnership with research institutions in France, the United States, Sweden, Switzerland and Thailand. The network will use the results of its research to monitor levels of drug resistance and generate information for evidence-based malaria treatment policies for the countries involved.

For more information see [www.who.int/tdr](http://www.who.int/tdr).

## Global to Local Engagement: Lessons Learned

### Governance and Management

- **Articulate a vision from headquarters.** The commitment of an organization to local engagement and empowerment is often driven from top leadership who convince others in the organization to give up a degree of control, both for decision-making generally, and resource utilization in particular. This is often part of the process of instilling deeper institutional cultural reform over time.
- **Include developing countries in governance structures.** Programs that succeed in engaging locally often have participants from developing countries on their governing boards, the board's voting arrangement's can empower developing countries, and boards draw knowledge from the South through advisory bodies comprised of people from developing countries. These arrangements are not always straightforward given the multiplicity of local stakeholders. Who, for example, should represent developing countries at the global level? Governments? Civil society? It may depend on who is largely responsible for implementation locally. Government may be especially important where it has a crucial role in creating an environment for effective implementation.
- **Balance global and local identities.** Global initiatives that succeed on the ground often have a "corporate identity" and at the same time are "legitimized" by local-decision-making and participation. There are often tradeoffs if there is an imbalance between these characteristics: The geographic spread of some global programs, and the perception that many are donor-driven, may give them standing as source of external experience or stature as a source of money. However, this does not ensure that such programs can win the trust needed to be effective locally.
- **Devolve operational structures without compromising effectiveness.** With the authority to design and

implement activities, local leaders can generate consensus and support, increasing the chances of sustainability when external funds are depleted. At the same time, implementation should be at the level of most immediate effectiveness, which is not always the lowest level. There are tradeoffs: Providing local stakeholders with a great deal of autonomy can threaten the coherence of a global effort. But too little autonomy, and local stakeholders (including field staff) lose the flexibility to respond to felt and urgent needs.

### Partnership and Implementation

- **Focus on a limited number of countries that are ripe for success.** Successful GPPs often concentrate on a few areas where progress can be demonstrated and where there is a healthy dialogue between government and civil society. In order to gain credibility, it may be particularly important for new initiatives to focus on where they can achieve quick "wins."
- **Exercise selectivity in identifying partners.** Partners need to be *credible* (ideally legitimated through a participatory process), and *capable* (have some experience, expertise or special knowledge). The level of expressed need for the activity is a particularly important prerequisite for success, as is interest by other donors and the possibilities for national or regional networking and replication. At the same time, organizations that chose only partners who have a glowing track record may miss opportunities for innovation.
- **Identify interventions through a collaborative process.** Ideas for interventions that come from multiple sources – global, national, local, community - acting in concert have a better chance of succeeding. Also, global programs may be the only vehicle available for local and community groups to access national institutions and processes.
- **Apply a multi-sectoral approach.** Interventions across sectors and disciplines will often be necessary. For example, it is difficult to imagine broad health or conservation outcomes without

simultaneous interventions in education, the private sector, research, and policy. At the same time, programs will need to decide who has the comparative advantage in each of these areas.

- **Catalyze government commitment.** While governments can be cumbersome and uncooperative, they have a critical role in delivering global public goods. Government provides an enabling environment, and is often the only sector that has adequate capacity for implementation. Thus, integrating activities within local provincial and national policy and planning frameworks may greatly increase the relevance of an initiative and opportunities for sustainability and replication.

### Resources and Capacity Building

- **Nurture relationships and apply resources downstream.** Many global programs are in the “upstream” business of producing knowledge and technology. But because they are evaluated on the basis of their ultimate impact on the ground, many programs are helping to build delivery mechanisms by nurturing relationships and spreading financial resources downstream.
- **Make sufficiently long-term, unrestricted commitments while maintaining incentives for performance and sustainability.** Single year funding is often too short to allow local partners to leverage support and grow. Such short-term commitments require organizations to begin fundraising replacement dollars almost immediately, and the time spent in proposal and report writing and meeting with potential funders can be prohibitive. At the same time, open-ended commitments can breed dependency, and other donors may shy away in the face of large, steady streams of support from a single source. Such commitments also lessen the incentive for organizations to diversify funding. Building a sustainable effort locally also requires devoting sufficient resources to infrastructure and salaries. Local organizations have few other sources of such support. (See Box 2 for more on grant making.)

- **Develop leadership capacity.** Identifying and training champions and committed change-agents is often essential. In the last few years, the trend has been to conduct local leadership training in-country. Funding for training abroad has been reduced by donors. Yet such training is invaluable. This should include attendance at conferences and workshops, activities that international partners often frown upon but which provide local practitioners a great sense of empowerment and inclusion.
- **Seize technology as a communication tool while recognizing its limitations.** Technology conveys ideas well and quickly, but conveys feelings and commitment clumsily. People helping people involves trust, compassion, anxiety, frustration, confidence, joy, etc. – all things best conveyed when people meet people.

#### Box 2: Making Grants Locally: Lessons From Experience<sup>8</sup>

- Set priorities and be selective
- Don't fund something just because it is a good idea; it should be strategic and replicable
- If strategic, don't always shy away for lack of capacity if it can be built
- Look for measurable indicators of what success would be
- Don't ignore what's difficult, including politically. Grants are an opportunity to empower people to engage the political process
- Ideas should evolve out of a collaborative process between grantor, grantee and – ideally – another financial partner
- Promote possibilities for broader collaboration, networking and exchange
- Develop leadership capacity
- Encourage sustainability through longer-term, yet defined commitments

<sup>8</sup> Drawn from discussion at a meeting of World Bank-supported intermediary grant makers supporting grass roots groups in maternal health. Paris, December 12, 2002.

## Catalyzing Government Commitment Through An Innovative Grant Mechanism: The Global Alliance For Vaccines And Immunization

The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) is a mechanism for coordinating and revitalizing immunization programs at the national level.

**Leveraging government financing.** The ability of partners to catalyze greater national commitment to improve immunization coverage and distribute new and under-used vaccines is limited by the variety of demands on the budgets of developing countries. The challenge was to design a financial tool that would leverage the efforts of national governments rather than act as a substitute for such spending and encourage governments to prioritize resources in favor of vaccines and immunizations.

**An innovative fund.** The tool is the Global Fund for Children's Vaccines which serves to finance underutilized and new vaccines, strengthen immunization delivery infrastructure, and support development of priority vaccines. The Fund is designed as part of a comprehensive package of assessment, planning, and coordinated support. It only supports unmet needs: once it is evident that countries have maximized their own resources and the resources of others for investing in immunization, the Fund will “close the gap.”

Funding proposals are developed by governments in collaboration with their National Inter-agency Coordinating Committee (ICC) or equivalent. The review of proposals starts with assessing whether there is a fully functioning ICC in place and understanding its role, responsibility and functions in relation to overall health sector planning, taking into consideration: Its terms of reference, clarity and transparency of decision making, level of the ICC chairman within the Ministry of Health, the list of members, and plans and budget requirements for strengthening the ICC if necessary.

The proposal must be based on a multi-year national immunization plan, drawn up by the government with the ICC. The plan is assessed on the basis of whether there has been an immunization assessment within the last three years, the plan's relationship to general health services strengthening, plans and targets for improving immunization coverage, a strategy to improve disease surveillance, a strategy for advocacy and social mobilization and – importantly - a budget forecast for government and partner contributions which demonstrates increased government investment and decreased external aid over time.

**Need and performance criteria.** The type and amount of funding received from the Fund is governed strictly by need and performance. National governments of countries with GNP/capita equal to or below US\$1,000 are eligible for support. Countries are considered for immunization funding with a reward for performance: Increases in the number of children immunized is used as the measure of performance. Countries receive “shares” on the basis of their up-front investment in plans to improve immunization services, and as a retrospective reward for additional children immunized. The investment is calculated on the number of additional children – over and above the number who are currently targeted – the government plans to reach in the future, with targets agreed to by the ICC and endorsed by GAVI. The reward is calculated at the end of each year, based on the number of additional children immunized. If, after two years, recipient countries do not show any increase in the number of children immunized, support is suspended until satisfactory progress is shown.

For more information see [www.vaccinealliance.org](http://www.vaccinealliance.org).

## Localizing and Empowering Field Staff: Conservation International in Botswana

Conservation International's (CI) Okavango Delta program aims to protect one of the world's largest wetlands and animal habitats against a multitude of threats. The program is working to maintain the ecological integrity of the Delta through education, policy dialogue, enterprise development, eco-tourism and research and monitoring.

These activities are governed and managed by local staff and stakeholders. They are supported by a Washington headquarters management team that values local knowledge and an organizational structure that makes available the best science and scientists in the world.

**Governing and managing locally.** CI's Okavango office is located in Maun, a small town at the entrance to the Delta. It is staffed by a dozen people, managed by a Country Director, and guided by a National Advisory Council which is chaired by the Minister of Lands and Okavango member of Parliament. The Vice President of Botswana also sits on the Council as well as on CI's International Board of Directors. Other Council members include the Paramount Chief, the Commander of the Botswana Defense Force, the Director of a local human rights group, and representatives of various other interest groups (cattle ranchers, tourism operators, the diamond industry, etc.)

Country staff are organized in thematic teams. Each team contributes to a three-year strategic plan and budget which is approved by the National Advisory Council and by Washington. The team is then allocated a part of the plan's approved annual budget. Washington provides 30-40 percent of the budget, covering salaries and overhead. The remainder is raised locally and regionally by country staff, with some support from headquarters. The Country Director has sufficient discretionary funding

and flexibility to make adjustments in allocations.

**Drawing from the community.** The country program draws heavily on the staff's local knowledge and experience. The Country Director is a wildlife management specialist who worked for the Government's Department of Wildlife and National Parks and the Forestry Association of Botswana. No other staff hold higher degrees. Most have been hired from the communities in which the program is active. For example, an effort to develop local enterprise in one of the last remaining Bushman communities is managed by a former member of that community. And the son of the community's Chief works full time for CI. CI's efforts to teach local schoolchildren about the Delta's biological richness is run by former staff of the Wildlife and National Parks Department. And its program to assist community members in commercial basket weaving is managed by a woman who pioneered the idea in another part of the Delta, and is herself a nationally recognized 'master weaver.'

**Supporting community action with global science.** While local interests and knowledge guide decision making at the country level, the Okavango program benefits from external resources needed to operate at the cutting edge. Thematic "hubs" and R&D centers in Washington inform the work program according to practices which have been developed and tested in other countries. For example, an eco-tourism initiative draws directly on CI's experience in Guatemala and Costa Rica. And research projects like aerial wildlife surveys and a rapid biological appraisal of the Delta rely on Washington's technical expertise and experience in similar wetlands such as the Pantanal in Brazil.

For more information see [www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org).

## Successful Approaches

### Balancing Global and Local Identities: Global and Regional Water Partnerships

The Global Water Partnership (GWP) is helping local stakeholders develop the capacity to articulate their need for water services by replicating itself regionally.

**Recipients of services as shapers of a larger service partnership.** The GWP recognizes that assistance by donors in the form of advice and support is often driven by the particular interests and bias of the donor. It is also the advice of aid professionals who are not the real sources of operational expertise. And the advice is fragmented by sub-sector (irrigation, power, water supply and sanitation, etc.), with little coherence among the pieces and the whole less than the sum of the parts. How might developing countries do more than just receive services? How might they play a central role in defining what exactly is needed and what they might have to share with others? One answer is to establish regional partnerships based on a global model that:

- Provide a forum for debate on regional water management issues, including discussions between donors and regional or sub-regional stakeholders on the coordination of support.
- Regionalize the global conceptual agenda of integrated water resources management and disseminate information on integrated water management practices.
- Assess local needs and articulate demands for services.
- Interact with GWP structures at the global and trans-regional levels, contributing to the discussion and exchange of experiences within the GWP.

**Structure of the regional partnership.** As in the global partnership, membership in the regional partnership is open to all entities in

the region with an interest in water resources management. In practice they are comprised of government ministries, water utilities industries, farm groups, water researchers and NGOs. There are knowledge-sharing linkages between the regional and global partnerships, but each regional partnership is expected to conduct its own affairs, raise its own funds using the GWP umbrella, and be subject to its own checks and balances.

**Managing the tension between a global identity and local legitimacy.** Perhaps the greatest challenge in this model is the perception that the global program is unduly influenced by the donor community and not truly representative of its members who are its constituents, and the fear that regional imitations might be similarly manipulated. However, the donor "tag" – the link to an international body - gives the regional partnership some authority, allowing it to serve as an engine for articulating principles and spreading good practice. Credible regional water partnerships must embody and manage the tensions arising from having a "corporate" identity tied to the global effort and being seen as legitimate representatives of their members.

A related challenge is a result of the basic participatory principle which the GWP insists guide the activities of regional partners. Regional partnerships are being asked by national governments to assist in preparing national programs of action with specific stakeholder targets. They cannot respond favorably to these requests unless there is a sufficiently strong commitment from governments to inclusion of all water stakeholders.

For more information see [www.gwpforum.org](http://www.gwpforum.org)

## Applying Resources Downstream: The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund

A fundamental purpose of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is to ensure that civil society and other local stakeholders who are personally committed to the welfare of their local environments are the driving force behind lasting, workable solutions to regional biodiversity threats. An additional purpose is to ensure that those efforts complement existing strategies and frameworks established by local, regional and national governments.

To ensure success for these alliances and coordination, the Fund provides an integrated package of financial support, technical expertise, field knowledge and administrative flexibility. The Internet offers global access to data collected from field projects so that organizations can share best practices and lessons learned.

**How the fund works.** CEPF supports the formation of new NGOs and expansion of existing organizations. It supports varying forms of capacity-building, including communications, understanding relevant laws, organizing policy interventions, natural resource planning and implementation, anti-poaching measures, forest inventory systems, and wildlife census methods.

There is no limit to the level of funding that NGOs can request. Funding may be given for a maximum of 5 years. Applicants must first consult the CEPF investment strategy for the region in which they propose to work. The strategy, called an ecosystem profile (the result of a participatory planning process, see below), guides the funds investments. Each project must be linked to one of the strategic directions in the profile to eligible for funding.

**A participatory profiling process in the Succulent Karoo.** In 2002, a pioneering team of more than 30 individuals from 15 institutions in Namibia and South Africa worked to establish a common vision and

strategy among diverse stakeholders for conservation of the Succulent Karoo biodiversity hotspot. The project team gathered biodiversity and land-use data for the region, which stretches more than 100,000 square kilometers across South Africa and Namibia. More than 60 scientific experts and 300 individuals representing communal land authorities, commercial farmers, mining companies, tourism interests, local government and conservation authorities helped map the distribution of current and projected land use - vital information that helped determine conservation priority areas. The process incorporated awareness-raising, training and partnerships as part of the process to develop an overarching plan and ultimately contribute to its effective implementation.

The project team included special advisors and four local coordinating organizations: the Botanical Society of South Africa, Eco-Africa, the Institute for Plant Conservation and the National Botanical Institute. It also included 10 local conservation champions, well-connected and respected individuals in their communities with biodiversity or social development expertise who raised awareness about the process and gathered vital information within their communities.

At the end of the year, more than 70 representatives of local, provincial and national government agencies, nongovernmental organizations and academic institutions from Namibia and South Africa participated in a consensus-building process to develop a final action plan. The workshop and other activities of the project team will result in a framework for conservation of the hotspot and a foundation for an ecosystem profile—a strategy document that will guide CEPF investments in the region.

For more information see [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net)

## Building Global and Local Constituencies Around Common Objectives: The World Commission on Dams

The World Commission on Dams (WCD, 1999-2001) was born out of the World Bank's first evaluation of Bank financed big dam projects. Disquiet about the document led the Bank and the International Union for Conservation and Nature (IUCN) to convene a workshop to discuss the review and initiate an open and transparent dialogue on the future of dams. The meeting represented all the stakeholders in the dams debate. Later to be called the "Gland Reference Group," they agreed to create the WCD. The agreement was possible because there was a strong commitment among all parties that the initiative would follow a process of *inclusions, independence, and transparency*.

**Transparency.** Following the Gland meeting, the process of negotiating the form and mandate of the WCD fell to an Interim Working Group, which derived its legitimacy from having been part of the Reference Group. The selection of the WCD Chair and Commission members was agreed upon because the nomination process went wide and deep those selected fairly represented a wide range of stakeholders. Also, the Chair and Commissioners would not officially represent any stakeholder group but would act in their individual capacities. The selection of South Africa's Prof. Kadar Asmal, a former anti-apartheid leader, as Chairman of the WCD gave the process immediate legitimacy.

The WCD mandate was agreed upon because it gave all stakeholders something to gain: A look into the experience of the past appealed to critics of dams; making proposals for the future appealed to proponents. And the fact that work would be completed within a specified two-year period made the Commission useful to everyone. The process gained such credibility that the small number of intransigent organizations

on both sides of the debate found themselves with no other option to influence the outcome than to participate.

**Inclusion.** A key structure was the WCD Forum, a more widely and deeply representative group than the Commission, consisting of about 70 people. The Forum was a mix of former Reference Group members and new stakeholders and interest groups. It was primarily a mechanism for maintaining a dialogue between the WCD and the respective constituencies of the Forum members. Thus, within the Forum there were ad hoc groups representing the private sector, NGOs, affected peoples and donors. The Forum has been crucial in ensuring that the Commission's results find acceptance.

The WCD produced a set of recommendations drawn from the Secretariat's knowledge base and feedback from the Forum and a series of regional consultations. It recognized that it was essential that stakeholders should have the opportunity to inform the knowledge base.

**Independence.** At the same time, agreement on the recommendations was only possible because the Commission was allowed to reach its own consensus from its independent review of the knowledge base and consultations. This avoided the "horse trading" which could result if Commission members were formally representing the various constituents. In that case, any consensus would simply reflect a lowest common denominator or least controversial position.. As a result, the Commission's conclusions, broke the stalemate on the contentious issues, the resolution of which is what brought stakeholders to the table in the first place.

For more information see [www.dams.org](http://www.dams.org)